



update

The monthly newsmagazine of the California Dental Association



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Trustees send access report to house

During its August meeting, the CDA Board of Trustees acknowledged the report, *Phased Strategies for Reducing the Barriers to Oral Health Care in California*, by recommending its filing with the House of Delegates.

Trustees also recommended to the house that the comprehensive strategies outlined in the report be used as a framework to direct CDA's future activities in efforts to reduce barriers



Understanding the barriers. Answering the need.

to oral health care.

The report's executive summary and 3-phase access proposal have been printed in this edition of the *Update* on Pages 5-10. In addition, the entire report is detailed along with commis-

sioned research online at cda.org/access.

In 2008, the House of Delegates recognized that a significant portion of Californians experience barriers to oral health care, resulting in a disproportionate burden of disease. In adopting Resolution 36S1-2008-H, the house directed the Policy Development Council to identify strategies to improve access to dental care for the nearly 30

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After a recent remodel, Dr. Gila Dorostkar's dental office was awarded LEED certification, an internationally recognized environmental designation.

Dental practices go green

Dentists offer office environmental tips

Gila Dorostkar, DDS, had a knack for being environmentally responsible way before she owned her own dental practice.

"I was one of those kids who took the shopping bags with me to the store for my mom to use," Dorostkar recalled.

Now providing oral health care to children as a pediatric dentist, Dorostkar is doing much more than recycling shopping bags. In November of last year, her Greenbrae office was awarded LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certifi-

cation by the U.S. Green Building Council. LEED is an internationally recognized green building certification system. It provides building owners and operators a framework for identifying and implementing practical and measurable green building design, construction, operations and maintenance solutions.

By installing state-of-the-art equipment and windows that maximize natural sunlight; moving to a digital, paperless environment; using recycla-

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CDA Cares free dental clinic to reach thousands

Many dentists across California provide pro bono care to the public (an estimated \$388 million in free services each year), but the work sometimes goes unnoticed and often is not concentrated to a specific venue — that changes next May.

CDA Cares, a new event aimed at providing free dental care to Californians in need, will be held May 18-19 in Modesto. The event is a collaborative effort between CDA, the CDA Foundation and the national charitable organization Mission of Mercy.

At the CDA Cares event, dentists will provide thousands of patients with free services such as cleanings, fillings, extractions, prosthetics, oral health education and assistance in finding a dental home.

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House set for November

The annual session of the 2011 CDA House of Delegates will be held Nov. 11-13 at the Sacramento Hyatt Regency.

The event will be attended by more than 200 delegates representing 32 local dental societies who will decide on issues of importance to CDA's membership. Among the delegates' duties will be to elect officers of the association.

CDA's Nominating Committee selected the following slate of officers for presentation to the house:

- President-elect: Lindsey A. Robinson, DDS
- Vice president: James D. Stephens, DDS
- Secretary: Walter G. Weber, DDS
- Treasurer: Clelan G. Ehrler, DDS
- Speaker of the house: Alan L. Felsenfeld, DDS

Also at the meeting, President-Elect Daniel G. Davidson, DMD, will be installed as president of CDA for 2011-12.

GREEN

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ble materials in the carpet, upholstery and wallpaper; and using low-toxin paint, Dorostkar was able to turn her 2,500-square-foot practice into a prime example of environmentally responsible dentistry.

“It was important to do because it improved the overall health of my staff and patients, and it gives my staff a clean environment to work in every day,” said Dorostkar, who began leasing her current building in December 2009.

Many people recycle at home; however, recycling in the business world is not as frequent (unless the county, local or waste management authority requires businesses to do so).

“We [dentists] do generate trash, and we do use materials that are potentially hazardous,” said Robert J. Marcus, DMD, who has gone completely paperless at his practice in Poway. “If you walk into a dental office that is not paperless or chart-based, you will see a lot of charts. And those are just the active ones; surely there are many inactive charts as well from years past.”

“Someday those charts are going to end up in a landfill somewhere.”

Marcus uses CDA Endorsed Program Demandforce, an automated marketing and communications tool that helps dentists retain and engage existing patients and track results, to keep all his patient records in an electronic format.

“This is a huge money-saver,” he said. Going paperless and implementing digital X-rays are two steps dentists can take to be more environmentally friendly, Marcus said.

Marcus, whose home is powered by solar panels, reflective roof sheeting, electric appliances and a specialized water heater, switched his practice to digital X-rays in 2003. He said the cost of the unit has long been recouped.

“It is hard to put a value on time. If I had my assistant processing X-rays for 10 minutes versus zero minutes, what’s that worth?” he said. “You have to take into account a lot of factors. ... But I would absolutely say, in my opinion, within two to three years you will re-



Among the upgrades in Dr. Gila Dorostkar’s office remodel are sensors that automatically turn lights off in nonoperatory areas of the office if there is enough natural sunlight.

couple the cost of a digital X-ray system.”

Dorostkar estimates that she spent \$40,000–\$50,000 on the improvements to her office that led to LEED certification. Other upgrades included light sensors that automatically turn lights off in nonoperatory areas of the office if there is enough natural sunlight and an air conditioner with two thermostats that circulates cool air through whichever side of the office is warmer based on the position of the sun.

“It is a significant investment, but I have no regrets about it all — it was worth it,” she said. “We are providing a healthy environment for the kids, and I think most of the parents appreciate the space; and there will be some cost-savings down the road.”

But it doesn’t have to take thousands of dollars to move toward a green office, Dorostkar said.

“Every little bit counts, and it is really worth making an effort. You can

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— Robert J. Marcus, DMD

institute an office recycling program, go to paperless records, use low VOC adhesives for your next wallpaper projector, minimize water consumption and paper towel usage with germicidal handwash. Many of these efforts can be easy and low-cost,” she said.

Tips for going green

The CDA Practice Support Center provides the following information to help dentists implement an environmentally responsible program in their practices.

Water conservation

- Install aerators that restrict flow on all faucets in the office.
- Convert wet cuspidors to dry.
- Consider installing motion sensors for hand washing.
- Install dual-flow toilets.
- Install water-efficient landscaping (drought tolerant plants and drip irrigation).

Waste reduction/recycling

- Minimize use of hazardous materials to the extent possible (including pharmaceuticals, cleaning products, restoratives, sterilants, etc.).
- Recycle hazardous waste streams whenever possible.
- Follow amalgam waste best management practices.
- Recycle fluorescent bulbs, electronics and batteries.
- Consider converting from traditional X-ray systems to digital to reduce lead foil waste.

Solid

- Minimize use of disposables such as using lab jackets, drapes and towels.
- Implement a recycling program for employees for plastic bottles, cups and cans.
- Minimize the use of paper through computerized records management.
- Recycle office paper and other waste materials. Note: Protected health information must be shredded.
- Use double-sided copying whenever possible.

Air and water considerations

- Consider use of nontoxic biodegradable cleaning products.
- Consider use of amalgam separators. Note: Required by some local jurisdictions; EPA is considering making amalgam separators mandatory.
- Properly dispose of X-ray and sterilization solutions.

Energy conservation

- Use low-energy lighting in common areas.
- Use low-voltage lighting in treatment rooms.

As an extra tip, Marcus recommends saving paper by sending e-mails to patients who are overdue or have an appointment coming up rather than postcards. When patients contact him and request postcards, he has this to say: “Well, we’ve gone green; we’re trying to be environmentally responsible and so that is why we switched to e-mail.”

For more information, visit cdacompass.com.



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